



News Release

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IDWR Delays Big Lost River Basin Ground Water Pumping Curtailment

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Ground water users in the Big Lost River Basin will not be required to shut down ground water pumping, at least for the time being, the Idaho Department of Water Resources announced late today.

IDWR had issued an order on July 12 requiring approximately 350 ground water rights in the Basin to stop pumping ground effective Friday (July 23) following a priority call for water by senior surface water users holding surface water rights with an 1883 priority.

IDWR says curtailment will not be required at present because the senior surface water users are still getting the water to which they are entitled. Water managers warn, however, that today's action does not remove the potential for curtailment should the senior right not get the water allowed under his water right.

Conjunctive water management rules in the Big Lost River Basin allow senior water right holders that anticipate their water rights will not be filled to request mitigation of depletions to flows in the Big Lost River caused by ground water pumping. That request for mitigation was made but the required mitigation has not been satisfied prompting IDWR to issue the July 12 curtailment order.

IDWR is issuing an amended order delaying potential curtailment until the later of: (a) the date senior water rights are not deliverable; or (b) August 3, 2004.

The August 3 date is one day after a status conference and special meeting of Water District No. 34 are scheduled to take place.

The July 12 curtailment order is available on the IDWR Internet web site at:
www.idwr.state.id.us.